

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~computer implemented~~ method performed by ~~for using a~~ device associated with ~~embedded in~~ an apparatus to report ~~the~~ a state of the apparatus to a remote computer that cannot directly address the device, the method comprising:

detecting the state of the apparatus, wherein detecting is performed by monitoring variables associated with the apparatus;

generating a message that reports the state of the apparatus using a self-describing computer language, wherein generating is performed periodically or in response to a deviation in the state; and

sending the electronic mail message to the remote computer;
wherein the deviation is indicative of an error condition in the apparatus, and wherein the error condition comprises one or more variables that deviate from an acceptable value or a predetermined range of acceptable values.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the message comprises an electronic mail message.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the message comprises a hypertext transfer protocol command.

4 and 5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein detecting the state comprises receiving the ~~state~~ variables from the apparatus.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein detecting the state comprises retrieving the ~~state~~ variables periodically from the apparatus.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein detecting the state comprises: obtaining an identifier for the apparatus, ~~the identifier relating to the state of the~~ apparatus; and reading the variables ~~state~~ from the apparatus using the identifier.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising[[.]] determining if the ~~deviation in the state of the apparatus has changed;~~ wherein the electronic mail message is generated if the state of the apparatus has changed.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein determining comprises comparing the state ~~received from the apparatus~~ to a previous state of the apparatus.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the self-describing computer language comprises eXtensible Markup Language (XML).

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the message is generated using a predefined template, the message being generated by:

obtaining one or more variables relating to the apparatus; and
inserting the one or more variables into the template.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the state of the apparatus is included as part of a body of the message.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the state of the apparatus is included as part of an attachment to the message.

15. (Currently Amended) A ~~computer implemented~~ method, performed by a computer, for obtaining a state of an apparatus from a device associated with ~~embedded~~ in the apparatus, the method comprising:

receiving, from the device, a message that reports the state of the apparatus using a self-describing computer language, the message being received from a network that includes the

device and that is not directly addressable by the computer, the message being received periodically or in response to a deviation in the state; and
extracting the state of the apparatus from the message;
wherein the deviation is indicative of an error condition in the apparatus, and wherein the
error condition comprises one or more variables that deviate from an acceptable value or a
predetermined range of acceptable values.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the message comprises an electronic mail message.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the message comprises a hypertext transfer protocol command.

18. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the self-describing computer language comprises eXtensible Markup Language (XML).

19 and 20. (Cancelled)

21. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising passing the state of the apparatus to a customer relationship management system.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer program stored on a computer-readable medium for use by a device associated with an apparatus to report a reporting the state of the an apparatus to a remote computer that cannot directly address the device, the computer program comprising instructions that cause the an embedded device in the apparatus to:

detect the state of the apparatus, wherein detecting is performed by monitoring variables associated with the apparatus;

generate a message that reports the state of the apparatus using a self-describing computer language, wherein generating is performed periodically or in response to a deviation in the state; and

send the electronic mail message to the remote computer;
wherein the deviation is indicative of an error condition in the apparatus, and wherein the error condition comprises one or more variables that deviate from an acceptable value or a predetermined range of acceptable values.

23. (Original) The computer program of claim 22, wherein the message comprises an electronic mail message.

24. (Original) The computer program of claim 22, wherein the message comprises a hypertext transfer protocol command.

25 and 26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) The computer program of claim 22, wherein detecting the state comprises receiving the state variables from the apparatus.

28. (Currently Amended) The computer program of claim 22, wherein detecting the state comprises retrieving the state variables periodically from the apparatus.

29. (Currently Amended) The computer program of claim 22, wherein detecting the state comprises:

obtaining an identifier for the apparatus, ~~the identifier relating to the state of the apparatus; and~~

reading the state variables from the apparatus using the identifier.

30. (Currently Amended) The computer program of claim 22, further comprising instructions that cause the ~~embedded~~ device to:

~~determine the deviation if the state of the apparatus has changed;~~

~~wherein the message is generated if the state of the apparatus has changed.~~

31. (Currently Amended) The computer program of claim 30, wherein determining comprises comparing the state ~~received from the apparatus~~ to a previous state of the apparatus.

32. (Original) The computer program of claim 22, wherein the self-describing computer language comprises eXtensible Markup Language (XML).

33. (Original) The computer program of claim 22, wherein the message is generated using a predefined template, the message being generated by:

obtaining one or more variables relating to the apparatus; and

inserting the one or more variables into the template.

34. (Original) The computer program of claim 22, wherein the state of the apparatus is included as part of a body of the message.

35. (Original) The computer program of claim 22, wherein the state of the apparatus is included as part of an attachment to the message.

36. (Currently Amended) A computer program stored on a computer-readable medium for use by a computer to obtain obtaining a state of an apparatus from a device associated with embedded in the apparatus, the computer program comprising instructions that cause a processor in the computer to:

receive, from the device, a message that reports the state of the apparatus using a self-
describing computer language, the message being received from a network that includes the
device and that is not directly addressable by the computer, the message being received
periodically or in response to a deviation in the state; and

extract the state of the apparatus from the message;
wherein the deviation is indicative of an error condition in the apparatus, and wherein the
error condition comprises one or more variables that deviate from an acceptable value or a
predetermined range of acceptable values.

37. (Original) The computer program of claim 36, wherein the message comprises an electronic mail message.

38. (Original) The computer program of claim 36, wherein the message comprises a hypertext transfer protocol command.

39. (Original) The computer program of claim 36, wherein the self-describing computer language comprises eXtensible Markup Language (XML).

40 and 41. (Cancelled)

42. (Original) The computer program of claim 36, further comprising instructions that cause the processor to pass the state of the apparatus to a customer relationship management system.

43. (Currently Amended) A device associated with ~~embedded~~ in an apparatus for reporting ~~the~~ a state of the apparatus to a remote computer that cannot directly address the device, the ~~embedded~~ device comprising circuitry which:

detects the state of the apparatus, wherein detecting is performed by monitoring variables associated with the apparatus;

generates a message that reports the state of the apparatus using a self-describing computer language, wherein generating is performed periodically or in response to a deviation in the state; and

sends the message to the remote computer;

wherein the deviation is indicative of an error condition in the apparatus, and wherein the error condition comprises one or more variables that deviate from an acceptable value or a predetermined range of acceptable values.

44. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the message comprises an electronic mail message.

45. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the message comprises a hypertext transfer protocol command.

46 and 47. (Cancelled)

48. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 43, wherein detecting the state comprises receiving the ~~state~~ variables from the apparatus.

49. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 43, wherein detecting the state comprises retrieving the ~~state~~ variables periodically from the apparatus.

50. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 43, wherein detecting the state comprises: obtaining an identifier for the apparatus, ~~the identifier relating to the state of the apparatus~~; and reading the ~~state~~ variables from the apparatus using the identifier.

51. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein:
the circuitry determines if the state of the apparatus has changed; and
the message is generated if the state of the apparatus has changed.

52. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 51, wherein determining comprises comparing the state ~~received from the apparatus~~ to a previous state of the apparatus.

53. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the self-describing computer language comprises eXtensible Markup Language (XML).

54. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the message is generated using a predefined template, the message being generated by:

obtaining one or more variables relating to the apparatus; and
inserting the one or more variables into the template.

55. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the state of the apparatus is included as part of a body of the message.

56. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the state of the apparatus is included as part of an attachment to the message.

57. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the circuitry comprises a memory which stores executable instructions and a processor which executes the instructions.

58. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the circuitry comprises one or more of an application-specific integrated circuit and a programmable gate array.

59. (Currently Amended) A first apparatus for obtaining a state of a second apparatus from a device associated with embedded in the second apparatus, the first apparatus comprising circuitry which:

receives, from the device, a message that reports the state of the second apparatus using a self-describing computer language, the message being received from a network that includes the

device and that is not directly addressable by the first apparatus, the message being received periodically or in response to a deviation in the state; and

extracts the state of the second apparatus from the message;

wherein the deviation is indicative of an error condition in the second apparatus, and wherein the error condition comprises one or more variables that deviate from an acceptable value or a predetermined range of acceptable values.

60. (Original) The first apparatus of claim 59, wherein the message comprises an electronic mail message.

61. (Original) The first apparatus of claim 59, wherein the message comprises a hypertext transfer protocol command.

62. (Original) The first apparatus of claim 59, wherein the self-describing computer language comprises eXtensible Markup Language (XML).

63 and 64. (Cancelled)

65. (Original) The first apparatus of claim 59, wherein the circuitry passes the state of the second apparatus to a customer relationship management system.

66. (Original) The first apparatus of claim 59, wherein the circuitry comprises a memory which stores executable instructions and a processor which executes the instructions.

67. (Original) The first apparatus of claim 59, wherein the circuitry comprises one or more of an application-specific integrated circuit and a programmable gate array.

68. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:
a first device comprising circuitry which generates a message reporting a state of an apparatus using a self-describing computer language, wherein reporting is performed following monitoring of variables associated with the apparatus, and wherein generating is performed periodically or in response to a deviation in the state, the deviation being indicative of an error condition in the apparatus and the error condition comprising one or more variables that deviate from an acceptable value or a predetermined range of acceptable values; and
the a second device, which can communicate in communication with the first device but which cannot directly address the first device, the second device comprising circuitry which receives the message from the first device and which relays content from the message to an external system.

69. (Original) The system of claim 68, wherein the message comprises an electronic mail message.

70. (Original) The system of claim 68, wherein the message comprises a hypertext transfer protocol command.

71. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 68, wherein the circuitry in the second device extracts the state of the apparatus from the ~~electronic mail~~ message.

72. (Original) The system of claim 68, wherein the first device is embedded in the apparatus and the second device comprises a remote computer.

73. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising queuing the message prior to sending the message.

74. (Original) The computer program of claim 22, further comprising instructions that cause the computer to queue the message prior to sending the message.

75. (Original) The device of claim 43, wherein the circuitry queues the message prior to sending the message.

76. (New) The system of claim 68, wherein the message includes a history log providing past states of the apparatus.

77. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the device is embedded in the apparatus.

78. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the device is embedded in the apparatus.

79. (New) The computer program of claim 22, wherein the device is embedded in the apparatus.

80. (New) The computer program of claim 36, wherein the device is embedded in the apparatus.

81. (New) The device of claim 43, wherein the device is embedded in the apparatus.

82. (New) The first apparatus of claim 59, wherein the device is embedded in the second apparatus.

83. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the message includes past states of the apparatus.

84. (New) The computer program of claim 15, wherein the message includes past states of the apparatus.

85. (New) The device of claim 22, wherein the message includes past states of the apparatus.

86. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the message includes a unique identifier that corresponds to the apparatus.

87. (New) The computer program of claim 15, wherein the message includes a unique identifier that corresponds to the apparatus.

88. (New) The device of claim 22, wherein the message includes a unique identifier that corresponds to the apparatus.